

CITY OF OAK FOREST
Economic Advisory Council
Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, July 2, 2025 – 12:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers, City Hall



15440 S. Central Avenue
Oak Forest, IL 60452
(708) 687-4050

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

1. May 7, 2025

NEW BUSINESS

1. Façade Grant Program – Discussion
2. Project Updates

OLD BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT



1. Call to Order at 12:06 p.m.

Present: Member Patricia Griffin
Member Patrick Gericke
Member Paul Hosman
Member Kim Malecky-Iles
Member Dan Walsh
Paul Ruane, staff liaison
Nicole Tormey, executive assistant

Absent: Chairman Don Vacha
Member Jim Emmett
Member Brian Martello

Paul Hosman motioned for Kim Malecky-Iles to be chairman pro temp. Patrick Gericke seconded. All present in favor.

Paul Ruane remarked member Paul Hosman will be excusing himself from the meeting. He is the tenant of the agenda item being presented.

2. Approval of Minutes from February 5, 2025

Member Patricia Griffin made a motion to approve the minutes from February 5, 2025. Motion was seconded by Member Paul Hosman. Minutes were approved by a vote of 5-0, with three members absent.

3. Project Updates

Paul Ruane updated the members on the following projects:

- 167th and Cicero (Logistics Facility)
 - Looking for tenants
- Carefree Village Senior Development NW corner of 151st and Cicero
 - Waiting on MWRD approval and marketing for commercial use on corner.
- Dunkin at 159th and Cicero
 - 99% completed.
- 156th and Cicero
 - Redevelopment agreement.
- 157th Street and Lamon Avenue
 - Redevelopment agreement.

4. Old business

Paul Ruane stated that Don would like to bring back the discussion on caps and number of façade grants allowed. Patti Griffin asked how much. Paul answered \$300,000 and change. Annually it is increased \$75,000.

Paul Hosman excused himself at 12:22 p.m.

5. New business

A. Façade grant request – Modern Way Cleaners – 5230 W. 159th Street

The request is to replace and reinstall a sign, painting, tuckpointing, removal and replacement of windows, doors, signage and landscaping. The total project equals \$66,260, eligible grant equals \$21,865.80.

Member Walsh inquired as to the percentage. Paul reported it is 33%. Member Walsh confirmed that is what needs to be paid. Paul answered yes.

Paul Ruane further reported that the applicant would like to update the inside as well with all new machines and upgrades.

Member Griffin asked if they are applying for a grant for the inside as well. Paul answered no, only external. There is a clause added to the grant that it is 10 year restriction on the property. If they sell or remove the business, they are required to pay back the grant.

Member Griffin made the motion to approve. Member Walsh seconded. All present answered in favor of the façade grant.

Member Malecky-Iles asked when the Community Planner was starting. Paul reported Monday.

6. Adjournment

Member Griffin made a motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Member Gericke. All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:33 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Nicole Tormey

CHAIRMAN VACHA



ALL GOOD THINGS CLOSE TO HOME

ECONOMIC ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMO

DATE: July 2, 2025

TO: Economic Advisory Council

FROM: Paul Ruane, Assistant Director of Community and Economic Development

SUBJECT: Façade Improvement Grant Discussion

Background

During the February 5, 2025 meeting of the Economic Advisory Council, staff was directed to review the City's Façade Improvement Grant Program. The Council discussed several key points for consideration as we explore options for potential updates:

- Minimum eligible project cost
- Maximum reimbursement amount
- Frequency of application eligibility for businesses/property owners?
- Inclusion of parking lots to ineligible costs

Municipality	Minimum Grant	Reimbursement %	Maximum Grant	Eligibility Frequency
Oak Forest	\$20,000	33% - 50%	None	Not defined
South Holland	\$5,000 (material)	35% - 50%	\$50,000	Every 3 Years
Blue Island	\$1,000 (material)	75%	\$7,500 + \$2,000 (signage)	Not defined
Homewood	\$1,500	50%	\$25,000	Not defined
Tinley Park	Not defined	50%	\$35,000/business \$70,000/3 years	Every 3 Years
Brookfield	Not defined	50%	\$20,000	Not defined

The current budget for the program is \$419,000, allocated entirely for façade improvements. Several projects are currently pending reimbursement:

- Cooper's Bar and Grill: \$13,893
 - Starbucks/ATI: \$16,421.46
 - Fairview Realty: \$4,954.29
 - Spark by Hilton: \$99,738.93
 - Modern Way Cleaners / Cindy's Pub: \$21,865.80
- Total: \$156,873.48

\$419,000 (current budget)
 -\$156,873.48 (active projects)
\$262,126.52

In recent years, the program has been replenished with an annual allocation of \$75,000.

Changes
Observations
Current Eligible Costs
~~To Remove from Code~~

§ 32.449 FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM.

(A) The economic advisory council is authorized to implement and oversee a facade improvement grant program to promote the continued use and maintenance of commercial buildings in the city and to recommend the payment of grants to business property owners for improvements to their building facades. The facade improvement grant program shall be administered as follows:

(1) *Grant eligibility.* To be eligible for a facade improvement grant, a building must be used in commercial or industrial purposes. Business property owners must propose to make at least \$20,000 in eligible improvements, as defined in division (A)(3) of this section, to be eligible for a facade improvement grant. Minimum of \$60,606.06 project for \$20,000 in grant funding (Current minimum requirements) Applicants must plan to install a minimum of \$1,500 of material improvements (excluding installation) to qualify.

(2) *Limit and nature of grant award.* Facade improvement grants will be issued to qualifying applicants in a maximum amount not greater than 33% of the actual cost of the eligible improvements except for qualifying sign amortization projects where the maximum amount will be not greater than 50% of the actual cost. No more than \$50,000 every 3 years, per building.

(3) *Eligible costs.* The following improvement costs are eligible for reimbursement from the facade improvement grant:

(a) Installation, repair and replacement of exterior exit doors to provide public access, meet current building and fire codes, and/or improve the overall appearance of the building;

(b) Painting of the exterior of the building;

(c) Repair, replacement or addition of exterior shutters and awnings, except for backlit and/or plastic awnings;

(d) Repair and replacement of signs;

(e) Repair, replacement and installation of exterior stairs, porches, railings and exit facilities;

(f) Repair and rebuilding of exterior walls, including cleaning, sealing, tuck-pointing, painting and the like;

(g) Tuck-pointing, other repair and cleaning of exterior bricks;

(h) Repair of windows, frames, sills, glazing, replacement of glass, and installation of new windows;

- (i) Repair or construction of **cornices** in order to replicate the building's original facade;
- (j) Repair, installation, replacement or addition of any other improvement the City Administrator deems appropriate; and
- (k) **Landscaping** and streetscape improvements including, but not limited to **brickpavers, lighting and furnishings**.

(4) *Ineligible costs*. The following improvement costs are not eligible for reimbursement from the facade improvement grant:

- (a) Building permit fees and related costs;
- (b) Extermination of insects, rodents, vermin and other pests;
- (c) Title reports and legal fees;
- (d) Acquisition of land or buildings; **and**
- (e) Air conditioning and heating facilities; **and**
- (f) **Parking lots;**

(B) *Application; submittals*. Applicants under this section shall submit the following application materials to the Community Development Director, or his or her designee:

(1) Once completed and original application form, on a form approved by and provided by the Community Development Director, which form shall include:

- (a) Applicant's name, address and contact information;
- (b) Subject property common address and property identification number;
- (c) Legal description of subject property;
- (d) Current use of the property;
- (e) Improvement information, including, without limitation:
 - 1. Contractor information;
 - 2. Cost estimate;
 - 3. Facade area;
 - 4. Requested amount of grant;
 - 5. Proposed improvements;
 - 6. Copies of the drawings of the proposed work, to scale and preferably in color; and
 - 7. Brief narrative description of the project;
- (f) Pictures of facade and particular areas to be enhanced; and

(g) Assessed value of the property.

(C) *Economic ~~Advisory Council Development Commission~~; review and recommendations; City Council action.*

(1) Upon the Community Development Director's receipt of application materials, he or she shall review the application to determine its completeness with the above requirements. If an application is deemed complete by the ~~Community Economic~~ Development Director, he or she shall submit a report to the ~~City Council Economic~~ **Advisory Council** outlining the facts, proposed improvements, and requested assistance.

(2) In the event that the Community Development Director finds that an application is incomplete or that the proposed scope of improvements are ineligible or partially ineligible for reimbursement under the facade improvement grant program, the Community Development Director shall inform the applicant in writing of any deficiency in his or her application or ineligible improvements.

(3) Not later than 45 days after receipt of the report from the Community Development Director, as established in division (C)(1) of this section, the ~~Economic~~ **Advisory Council** ~~City Council~~ shall convene to consider the application and a draft facade improvement grant agreement, ~~which~~ shall be approved by resolution duly adopted ~~by City Council with the condition that the Economic Advisory Council holds a public meeting~~ to approve final cost estimates.

(4) The Economic Advisory Council shall convene to review and approve final cost estimates, and grantee award amount. If the applicant fails to submit three adequate cost estimates, the Economic Advisory Council may deny approval and/or return application back to City Council for consideration.

(D) *Conditions.* The applicant shall be subject to the following conditions.

(1) Upon approval of the application, the applicant shall enter into a facade improvement grant agreement with the City of Oak Forest the form and substance of which to be provided by the Community Development Director, which shall govern the use of the grant. The agreement shall be recorded with the office of the Cook County Recorder of Deeds. The applicant shall be responsible for all fees and costs incurred in recording the facade improvement grant agreement.

(2) The applicant shall execute a restrictive covenant for the maintenance of facade improvements. The restrictive covenant shall be recorded with the office of the Cook County Recorder. The applicant shall be responsible for all fees and costs incurred in recording the restrictive covenant.

(3) Should the applicant fail to complete the eligible cost items or otherwise abandon the property before completion of the eligible cost items, the city shall have a lien against the property in its favor in the amount of the facade improvement grant released to the applicant.

(4) The applicant must maintain in good condition, and not change in any manner whatsoever, without first obtaining the express prior written consent of the City

Administrator, the eligible cost items for which funds from the facade improvement grant were used for a period of at least ten years from the completion of those items, pursuant to the restrictive covenant for the maintenance of facade improvements.

(5) In the event that the owner of the building sells, transfers or conveys the property within five years after the date upon which any funds have been released from the facade improvement grant, the owner, or his or her successor, shall reimburse the city for the funds then released, to the date of sale, transfer or conveyance, from the facade improvement grant in accordance with the following sliding scale.

Year of Sale	Percentage of City Grant Then Release to Reimburse
Up to one year	100%
Up to two years	80%
Up to three years	60%
Up to four years	40%
Up to five years	20%

Resolution #	Business	Address	Amount	Type of Work	Results	Status
2025-05-0491R	Modern Way Cleaners	5230 W. 159th Street	\$21,865.80	Door, Painting, Signage, Landscaping	City Council Approved	(Under Construction)
2024-03-0457R	Taco Bell	5301 W. 159th Street	\$23,400.00	EIFS, Tuckpointing, Doors and Windows, Monument Sign, Landscaping, Awnings, Wall Signage, Demolition	Reimbursement Issued	
2024-02-0456R	Spark By Hilton	4375 Frontage Road	\$99,738.93	Stucco, Painting, Tuckpointing, Windows, Landscaping, Signage	City Council Approved	(Under Construction)
2023-10-0447R	Cooper's Bar & Grill	15158 S. Cicero Avenue	\$13,893.00	Monument Sign, Painting, Concrete Walk	City Council Approved	(Under Construction)
2023-05-0439R	Continuum Oak Forest LLC.	15850 S. Cicero Avenue	\$16,421.46	Siding, replace awning tierods, painting exterior façade, painting windows, downspouts, and coping,	City Council Approved	(Under Construction)
2023-02-0435R	Oliver's Bar & Grill	6150 W. 159th Street	\$8,080.71	Siding, landscaping, patio, façade, and windows	Reimbursement Issued	
2023-01-0434R	Clover's Bar & Grill	15548 S. Cicero Avenue	\$7,781.40	Pole Sign and Awning	Reimbursement Issued	
2022-06-0426R	Grey's Social	5420 W. 159th Street	\$13,263.47	Painting, Glass Doors, Decorative Fencing, Planters, Landscaping, Monument Sign, and Wall Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2021-10-0412R	Oak Forest Family Dental	6154 W. 159th Street	\$54,324.00	Monument Sign, Stone, Cast Stone, Stucco, Glass, Aluminum Awning, Lighting, Labor	Reimbursement Issued	
2021-09-0411R	D.A.'s Deli	5201 W. 167th Street	\$7,003.70	Monument Sign, Building Signage, and Directional Signs	Reimbursement Issued	
2021-06-0406R	Captain Jack's	15211 South Cicero Ave	\$40,649.45	Monument Sign, Wall Signage, Landscaping, Door, Windows, Panels, Painting, Masonry, Stucco	Reimbursement Issued	
2020-09-0380R	Fairview Realty	15411 Cicero Ave	\$8,987	Monument Sign, Landscaping, and Brick Stain	City Council Approved	(Under Construction)
2020-02-0362R	Tim Axarides	5233 W 159th Street	\$49,703	Monument Sign, Landscaping, Façade, Windows, and Awnings	Reimbursement Issued	
2019-03-0348R	First Secure Bank	15901 Central Avenue	\$9,212	Monument Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2018-09-0338R	Beggar's Pizza	15600 Cicero Ave	\$20,828	Cicero Streetscape Parking Lot Lighting	Reimbursement Issued	
2018-08-0336R	Original Pancake House	5140 159th Street	\$16,643	Aluminum Storefront and Landscaping	Reimbursement Issued	
2018-06-0333R	Shopping Plaza	5200 159th Street	\$97,000		Never Completed	
2018-04-0331R	Hickey Electric	15048 Cicero Ave	\$18,967.54	Masonry Repairs, Windows, Repair and Stain Foot Bridge, and Landscaping	Building was Sold. % of Recapture Payment to City Received	
2018-01-0323R	Oak Forest Marathon	15100 Cicero Ave	\$10,000	Monument Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2017-09-0320R	Ziebart	6130 W. 159th Street	\$6,345	Monument Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2017-03-0306R	Anytime Fitness	5570 W 159th Street	\$4,373	Wall Signs and Windows	Reimbursement Issued	
2016-07-0294R	De Re Tire	5740 W. 159th Street	\$9,790.19	Monument Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2016-06-0290R	Rizzo's Service	5600 W. 147th Street	\$5,666.66	Paving	Reimbursement Issued	
2016-06-0289R	Pacor Mortgage	14930 S. Cicero Ave	\$16,855.08	Monument Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2015-08-0269R	Oak Forest Bowl	15240 S. Cicero Ave	\$20,000	Monument Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2015-08-0268R	Blarney Stone	15400 S. Cicero Ave	\$20,000	Monument Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2014-10-0244R	Blarney Stone	15400 S. Cicero Ave	\$2,503.67	Lighting and Awnings	Reimbursement Issued	
2014-06-0235R	Citgo	15229 S. Cicero Ave	\$8,026	Monument Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2014-06-0234R	Accurate Accounting	6006 W. 159th Street	\$1,575	Mansard Roof	Reimbursement Issued	
2013-06-0205R	Guillermo Rivera	5233-5251 W 159th Street	\$16,667	Awnings, Roof, EIFS, Landscaping, Parking Lot Improvements, and Signage	Reimbursement Issued	
2012-04-0173R	Patti G's Salon	15126 S. Cicero Avenue	\$1,992	Signage and Window Improvements	Reimbursement Issued	
2012-01-0163R	Lucky's Restaurant	16200 S. Cicero Avenue	\$10,000	Masonry, Windows, Doors, Signage, Parking Lot, Lighting, Fencing, and Landscaping	Reimbursement Issued	
2012-01-0164R	Central Collision Center	15232 Oak Park Avenue	\$5,630	Monument and Wall Signage	Reimbursement Issued	
2012-01-0165R	SLR Auto	5141 W. 159th Street	\$10,000	Masonry, Roof, Windows, and Doors	Reimbursement Issued	
2011-08-0156R	John Delligiannis	16142-16150 Cicero Ave	\$1,300	Painting and Parking Lot Improvements	Reimbursement Issued	
2011-05-0147R	Rennology Motor Sport	6130 W 159th Street	\$5,864	Signage and Landscaping	Reimbursement Issued	
2010-10-0133R	Villa Rivera	5233 W 159th Street			Reimbursement Issued	
2010-04-0124R	Tower Car Wash	5233 W 159th Street	\$6,495	EMC Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2010-04-0123R	Mickey's	15221 S. Cicero Ave	\$10,000	Parking Lot, Landscaping, Improved Detention	Reimbursement Issued	
2010-04-0122R	John Amico School of Hair	15301 S. Cicero Ave	\$4,269.79	Painting and Signage	Reimbursement Issued	
2010-03-0117R	Oak Forest Banking Center	5459 W 159th Street		Wall and Monument Sign	Reimbursement Issued	
2009-09-0106R	Oak Forest Animal Clinic	15701 S Cicero Ave	\$7,390.02	Parking Lot, Monument Sign, and Landscaping	Reimbursement Issued	
2009-08-0105R	Oak Forest Bowl	15240 S Cicero Ave	\$20,000	Parking Lot, Façade, and Building Signage	Reimbursement Issued	
2008-12-0092R	Merlin Mufflers	6012 W 159th Street	\$9,804.96	Exterior Improvements	Reimbursement Issued	
2007-06-0044R	Chilly Willy's	15501 S. Cicero Ave	\$8,293	Signage and Deck Improvements	Reimbursement Issued	
2007-06-0045R	R/S Automotive	5135 W. 159th Street	\$5,561	Awning, Signage, and Landscaping	Reimbursement Issued	
2007-10-0053R	Malecky Builders	15534-42 S. Cicero	\$7,914.06	Tuckpointing, Staircase, Siding, and Gutters	Reimbursement Issued	
2006-06-0017R	All Seasons Marine/American Family Ins	15335-37 S. Cicero Ave	\$5,000	Streetscape, Retaining Wall, and Landscaping	Reimbursement Issued	
	Unbeatable Eatables	5544 W 147th Street	\$346.50	Signage	Reimbursement Issued	
2006-06-0019R	Oliver's Bar & Grill	6150 W. 159th Street	\$5,000	Parking Lot, Sidewalk, and Driveway Apron	Reimbursement Issued	
2006-10-0024R	Style Carpets	4720 W. 153rd Street	\$3,206	Parking Lot and Fencing	Reimbursement Issued	
2006-11-0025R	Original Pancake House	5140 W. 159th Street	\$10,000	Awnings, Wall Signage, Concrete Ramp, and New Walls	Reimbursement Issued	

20 Years	\$787,630.50	\$15,752.61	Average over 20 Years
10 Years	\$620,791.89	\$23,876.61	Average over 10 Years
5 years	\$365,111.92	\$28,085.53	Average over 5 Years